Economic forum observations on Indian Economy

2714. SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Geneva-based Economic Forum has ranked Indian economy a low eighth among a group of 10 developing nations and held that the Indian economy is still far away from generating foreign investors' confidence in terms of domestic strength;

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) what steps are being taken or proposed to be taken to develop economic strength in the sphere of internationalisation, infrastructure and performance of capital markets and the quality of financial services?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE: (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) The World Competitiveness Report 1991 jointly issued by the World Economic Forum and IMO, Lausanne, has ranked separately the members of the OECD plus Hungary and 10 newly industrialised countries including India. The ranking is on the basis of 330 criteria devided into 8 broad categories, namely, domestic economic strength, internationalisation, Government, finance, infrastructure, management, science & technology and people. Among the 10 newly industrialised countries, India is ranked 4th in Science & Technology 7th in Management, 8th in Domestic Economic Strength, 9th in Government and Finance and 10th in Internationalisation, Infrastructure and People.

(b) and (c) The Government has already undertaken a package of macroeconomic stabilisation measures such as exchange rate adjustment, restoration of fiscal discipline and a tight monetary policy along with structural reforms in the spheres of trade, industrial and public sectors. These policies are expected to increase efficiency and productivity and thereby India's international competitiveness, impart dynamism to the growth process and provide a solid foundation for higher exports and overall growth. Further measures may be taken as and when demanded by the emerging economic trends.

Freeze on Central D.A. of Government Employees

2715. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to impose a freeze on the Central D.A. during 1992-93;

(b) if so, whether any decision has been taken in this regard;

(c) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(d) What is its likely overall impact on the Central and State Government employees?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SHANTARAM POTDUKHE): (a) No such proposal is under consideration of the Government at present.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Appeal for reduction of Import Duty

2716. SHRI SYED SIBTEY RAZI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether some appeal has been made by the Birla Economic Research Foundation for lowering import duties;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof alongwith background for such appeal;

(c) whether such a steps will help